

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 EB-07 SAB-01 SAM-01 ACDA-05

SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 IO-10

/094 W

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R 020820Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2247

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME VIA POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 0620

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, FR

SUBJECT: TOWARDS AN IMPROVEMENT IN FRENCH-LIBYAN RELATIONS?

1. ON MAY 31, THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR DELIVERED TO PRIME MINISTER JALLUD A MESSAGE FROM PRIME MINISTER CHIRAC WHICH THE LIBYAN PRESS DESCRIBES AS "IMPORTANT". THE AMBASSADOR TOLD THE CHARGE THAT HIS MEETING WITH JALLUD LASTED FOR NINETY MINUTES, BUT HE DID NOT DISCUSS THE CONTENTS OF THE MESSAGE.

2. COMMENT: FRENCH-LIBYAN RELATIONS HAVE BEEN GOING THROUGH A COOL PERIOD RECENTLY, AFTER THE HONEYMOON OF QADHAFI'S 1973 VISIT TO PARIS AND THE MIRAGE DEAL, AND IT IS LIKELY THAT BOTH THE FRENCH AND LIBYANS ARE NOW ANXIOUS TO IMPROVE THEM. THERE HAVE BEEN FRICTIONS OVER THE MIRAGE PROGRAM, WHICH IS PLAGUED WITH MAINTENANCE AND PILOT PROBLEMS, AND THE LIBYANS HAVE REPORTEDLY BEEN DISTURBED BY WHAT THEY SEE AS A DIMINISHED FRENCH INTEREST IN THEM SINCE PRESIDENT GISCARD CAME INTO OFFICE. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE FRENCH EMBASSY HERE HAS ARGUED TO PARIS THAT MORE HIGH-LEVEL ATTENTION
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SHOULD BE PAID TO LIBYA, BUT TO NO AVAIL. LIBYAN
PROTESTS TO FRANCE OVER FRENCH ORGANIZATION OF THE PRODUCER-

CONSUMER DIALOGUE, "COLONIALISM" IN THE AFARS AND ASSAS AND THE EC-ISRAEL ECONOMIC AGREEMENT HAVE PRESUMABLY NOT HELPED MATTERS.

3. THE KOSYGIN VISIT HERE MAY 12-15 MAY HAVE BROUGHT HOME TO BOTH SIDES THAT THEY NEED EACH OTHER. THE FRENCH EMBASSY HERE HAS REPORTEDLY BEEN WARNING PARIS FOR SOME TIME ABOUT THE STRATEGIC CONSEQUENCES OF SOVIET ADVANCES IN LIBYA, AND RECOMMENDED A MORE ACTIVE POLITICAL ROLE HERE. FOR THEIR PART, THE LIBYANS MAY BE COMING TO THE CONCLUSION THAT CLOSE POLITICAL RELATIONS WITH FRANCE, IN ADDITION TO THE EXISTING COMMERCIAL RELATIONS AND MILITARY SALES, CAN BE USED TO OFFSET SOVIET INFLUENCE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ellisoob
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975TRIPOL00620
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750192-0319
From: TRIPOLI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750688/aaaadctm.tel
Line Count: 75
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ellisoob
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 MAY 2003 by MartinML>; APPROVED <14 OCT 2003 by ellisoob>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TOWARDS AN IMPROVEMENT IN FRENCH-LIBYAN RELATIONS?
TAGS: PFOR, FR, LY, (JALLUD, ABD AL-SALAM), (CHIRAC, JACQUES)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006